For Sarah P. Simmons
Poet. on her birthday
(almost) - 1974
With admiration
and love,
Peter S.

OF THIS EDITION OF *OLD PASTURES*, TWO HUNDRED COPIES HAVE BEEN PRINTED, EACH NUMBERED AND SIGNED BY THE AUTHOR. THIS IS COPY NUMBER 137

Padraic Colum

OLD PASTURES

OLD PASTURES

PADRAIC COLUM

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1930

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IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER

F. H. C.

YOU WHO MADE NO CLAIMS AND GAVE NO DENIALS, SOL-
DIER AND SAILOR WHO COULD HAVE BEEN COMPANION
OF MEN WHO CARRIED THE EAGLES

NOTE

As I go through this collection I note that many of the pieces in it have originals in other languages: "At the Fore of the Year" is derived from an Irish traditional song; "A Man Bereaved" and "Queen Gormlai" are derived one from a Scottish Gaelic and the other from an Irish mediaeval poem; "Branding the Foals" is a reminiscence of a Latin epigram. Then there are the pieces that make the little collection "Hawaii." The heroic character and history of the Kanaka-Maori people rather than their soft charm appealed to me and so I put first in this collection a piece about the emblem of their warriors—the lehua blossom: it imitates but does not translate an Hawaiian poem. The second piece is a translation, but it is of a little popular song which was evidently made under European influence—the refrain means "From the cold." The third is a translation: it is *mele inoa* or name-song, belonging to a type which is made to introduce a character and a name. The fifth is a translation of a famous poem, "Mele Ahiahi," or Evening Song: it should be noted that the word *tapu* has a more extended meaning than the one which we have imposed in *taboo*—it means "consecrated," or "belonging to the gods."

And to *The Dial*, *The Commonweal*, *The New Republic*, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, *The Irish Statesman*, *Scribner's Magazine*, *The Chapbook*, *Harper's Bazaar*, I wish to return thanks for the permissions to republish several of the pieces that are given in this book.

PADRAIC COLUM.

New York, August, 1930.

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OLD PASTURES

DUBLIN ROADS

When you were a lad that lacked a trade,
Oh, many's the thing you'd see on the way
From Kill-o'-the-Grange to Ballybrack,
And from Cabinteely down into Bray,
When you walked these roads the whole of a day.

High walls there would be to the left and right,
With ivies growing across their top,
And a briary ditch on the other side,
And a place where a quiet goat might crop,
And a wayside bench where a man could stop.

A hen that had found a thing in her sleep,
One would think, the way she went craw-craw-cree,
You would hear as you sat on the bench was there,
And a cock that thought he crew mightily,
And all the stir of the world would be

A cart that went creaking along the road,
And another cart that kept coming a-near;
A man breaking stones; for bits of the day
One stroke and another would come to you clear,
And then no more from that stone-breaker.

And his day went by as the clouds went by,
As hammer in hand he sat alone,
Breaking the mendings of the road;
The dazzles up from the stones were thrown,
When, after the rain, the sun down-shone.

And you'd leave him there, that stone-breaker,
And you'd wonder who came to see what was done
By him in a day, or a month, or a week:
He broke a stone and another one,
And you left him there and you travelled on.

A quiet road! You would get to know
The briars and stones along by the way;
A dozen times you'd see last year's nest;
A peacock's cry, a pigeon astray
Would be marks enough to set on a day;

Or the basket-carriers you would meet—
A man and a woman—they were a pair!
The women going beside his heel:
A straight-walking man with a streak of him bare,
And eyes that would give you a crafty stare.

Coming down from the hills they'd have ferns to sell,
Going up from the strand, they'd have cockles in stock:
Sand in their baskets from the sea,
Or clay that was stripped from a hillside rock—
A pair that had often stood in the dock!

Or a man that played on a tin-whistle:
He looked as he'd taken a scarecrow's rig;
Playing and playing as though his mind
Could do nothing else but go to a jig,
And no one around him, little or big.

And you'd meet no man else until you came
Where you could look down upon the sedge,
And watch the Dargle water flow,
And men smoke pipes on the bridge's ledge,
While a robin sang by the haws in a hedge.

Or no bird sang, and the bird-catchers
Would have talk enough for a battle gained,
When they came from the field and stood by the bridge,
Taking shelter beside it while it rained,
While the bird new-caught huddled and strained

In this cage or that, a linnet or finch,
And the points it had were declared and surmised:
And this one's tail was spread out, and there
Two little half-moons, the marks that were prized;
And you looked well on the bird assized!

Then men would go by with a rick of hay
Piled on a cart; with them you would be
Walking beside the piled-up load:
It would seem as it left the horses free,
They went with such stride and so heartily.

And so you'd go back along the road.

FUCHSIA HEDGES IN CONNACHT

I think some saint of Eirinn wandering far
Found you and brought you here—
Demoiselles!—
For so I greet you in this alien air!

And like those maidens who were only known
In their own land as daughters of the King,
Children of Charlemagne—
You have, by following that pilgrim-saint
Become high votresses—
You have made your palace beauty dedicate,
And your pomp serviceable:
You stand beside our folds!

I think you came from some old Roman land—
Most alien, but most Catholic are you:
Your purple is the purple that enfolds
In Passion Week, the Shrine,
Your scarlet is the scarlet of the Wounds:
You bring before our walls, before our doors
Lamps of the Sanctuary;
And in this stony place
The time the robin sings,
Through your bells rings the Angelus!

WOODBINE

The hawthorns now
Are gone from the hedge—
Their scent, their flower;
But a moon-coloured spray,
And a foam-coloured spray
Are near the thatch,
Where, round the porch,
With stem as thick
As beam within
The woodbine grows.

The ash-tree planted
With the same spade
Is neighbour only:
Geraniums set
In window-sills
Last but as long
As red paint,
Or whitewash coat
On door or wall:
Nothing that grows
Is leased to the house
So long, so close
As this hedge-thing.

An old man rising
From where he has lain,
Pains in his joints,
Wide-opens the door:

On a sudden he feels
That boon that brings him
The meadow-slope,
With the young calves,
And his own delight—
The woodbine scent!

He hears, but heeds not
The fiddle within;
He is back in mornings
When cuckoos called:
Then this old man
From the porch goes in.

A girl who comes
Feels the fragrance here,
And, ere she raises
The latch that brings her
To join the dance,
Her hand has lifted—
The moon-coloured spray,
The foam-coloured spray
Are at her breast,
With the scent of that
Which bides by the house
So long, so close,—
The hedgerow-thing!

LILAC BLOSSOMS

We mark the playing-time of sun and rain,
Until the rain too heavily upon us
Leans, and the sun stamps down upon our lustres,
And then our trees stand in their greennesses
No different from the privets in the hedges,
And we who made a pleasaunce at the door-step,
And, whether by the ash-heap or the spring-well
Growing, were ever fresh and ever radiant,
And fragrant more than grass is—
We, we are gone without a word that praised us—
You did not know how short the playing-time!

BRIAR BLOSSOMS

What of the rose's
Rere-relations,
The briar-blossoms
Growing like shreds
Of linen bleaching
On wide green leaves—
One, then a hundred
Coming unnoted—
Scentless blossoms?

Us, the briars,
The aboriginals;
Outside the pales
Of gardens trailing,
Beside down-tumbled
Barns bearing
Untended blossoms?
You who would know us
Yourselves humble!

AT THE FORE OF THE YEAR

At the fore of the year, and on Candlemas Day,
All early at Mass I remarked her—
Like the dew on green corn, as bright and as clear
Were her eyes, and her voice was the starling's!

With bragging and lies, I thought that her mind
I 'd engage, and then win her with praises,
But through Spring and through Summer she has left me
to rise
Every day with a pain that will slay me!

O come, O my love, ere the life from me goes
If your hand but to lightly lay on me,
And a grief take away that none else can remove—
For now 'tis the reaping of barley!

A MAN BEREAVED

My wife and my comrade
Will not come at all
Though the pine-tree shall flourish,
The green rush grow tall,
And its cone to the ground
The larch-tree let fall.

She'll not cross this threshold,
Nor with me abide,
Sit down on this door-step,
Nor lie by my side;
And I'll not hear her sounding
Songs over the din,
Where the people are crowded,
The harvest being in,
Nor see her come lilting
From the field or the fold,
Nor plaiting her long locks
In the young moon nor old.

No more to the hill-tops
Have I heart to go,
Nor to walk through the woods
When the summer sun's low:
Though I weary with delving,
With driving the plough,
I lie on a bed
Sleep has gone from now.

Though goats to their time come
With nobody there;
Though the watched heifer calve
With none to take care,
From the church-yard my woman
Home never will fare.

My house is encumbered,
Unswept my hearth-stone,
The cows low for their milking
In the full height of noon.
No garb is made newly,
No wool is yet spun;
On the floor and untended
Stands the youngling, my son.

On the hills they cry ba-ba,
And bring back their dam;
On the floor and unanswered
Stands the youngling, my lamb,
While I 'm saying over
That she'll not come at all
Though the pine-tree shall flourish,
The green rush grow tall,
And its cone to the ground
The larch-tree let fall!

Not fingers that e'er felt
Fine things within their hold
Drew needless in and through,
And smoothed out the fold,
And put the hodden patch
Upon the patch of grey—
Unseemly is the garb
That's for my back to-day!

O skinflint woman, Mor,
Who knows that I speak true—
I had women once,
A queen's retinue;
And they were ones who knew
The raiment of a queen;
Their thoughts were on my tire,
Their minds were on my mien!

Light of hand and apt,
And companionable,
Seven score women, Mor,
I had at my call,
Who am to-day begrudged
The blink of candle-light
To put it on, the garb
That leaves me misbedight.

I wore a blue Norse hood
The time I watched the turns

And feats of Clann O'Neill—
We quaffed from goblet-horns;
A crimson cloak I wore
When, with Niall the King,
I watched the horses race
At Limerick in the spring!

In Tara of King Niall
The gold was round the wine,
And I was given the cup—
A furze-bright dress was mine;
And now this clout to wear
Where I rise to sup whey,
With root-like stitches through
The hodden on the grey!

No more upon the board
Candles for Kings are lit,
No more can I bid her
And her bring gowning fit;
The bramble is no friend—
It pulls at me and drags;
This thorny ground is mine
Where briars tear my rags!

THE TIN-WHISTLE PLAYER

'Tis long since, long since, since I heard
A tin-whistle played,
And heard the tunes, the ha'penny tunes
That nobody made!

The tunes that were before Cendfind
And Cir went Ireland's rounds—
That were before the surety
That strings have given sounds!

And now is standing in the mist,
And jigging backward there,
Shrilling with fingers and with breath,
A tin-whistle player!

He has hare's eyes, a long face rimmed
Around with badger-grey;
Aimless, like cries of mountain birds,
The tunes he has to play—

The tunes that are for stretches bare,
And men whose lives are lone—
And I had seen that face of his
Sculptured on cross of stone,
That long face, in a place of graves
With nettles overgrown.

A MOUNTAINEER

Ere Beowulf's song
Was heard from the ships,
Ere Roland had set
The horn to his lips:

In Ogham strokes
A name was writ:
That name his name
Lives in yet.

The strokes on the edge
Of the stone might count
The acres he has
On this bare mount;

But he remembers
The pillar-stone,
And knows that he is
Of the seed of Conn.

BREFFNE CAOINE

Not as a woman of the English weeping over a lord of the
English
Do I weep—
A cry that scarcely stirs the heart!
I lament as it is in my blood to lament—
Castle and stronghold are broken,
And the sovereign of the land beside the lake lies dead—
Mahon O'Reilly!
In his day the English were broken:
I weep beside Loch Sheelin, and the day is long and grey!

AT CASHEL

Above me stand, worn from their ancient use
The King's, the Bishop's, and the Warrior's house,
Quiet as folds upon a grassy knoll:
Stark-grey they stand, wall joined to ancient wall,
Chapel, and Castle, and Cathedral.

It is not they are old, but stone by stone
Into another lifetime they have grown,
The life of memories an old man has:
They dream upon what things have come to pass,
And know that stones grow friendly with the grass.

The name has crumbled—CASHEL that has come
From conqueror-challenging CASTELLUM—
Walls in a name! No citadel is here,
Now as a fane the empty walls uprear
Where green and greener grass spreads far and near!

SONG OF STARLINGS

We've watched the starlings flocking past the statues
That we have often seen in other cities—
Hope, Justice, Commerce—and have heard them sing
Unvarying songs that are their memories—
Memories of winds that they've been blown by,
And rivers bordered with their beds of sedges,
And level lands on which are empty folds.
Daylight dims, and we
May not return to where a lamp
Beams, making a room familiar, and a wife
Tells of the children's doings: we hear the starlings
As we have heard them often in other cities,
Around other cupolas, along other cornices,
In sunless parks bunched on the tops of trees,
And see around us bleak, monotonous fields
Our hearts must ever hold—theirs are these songs—
These are the songs that most touch us exiles!

THE CONDORS IN THE JARDIN DES PLANTES

To sink into the depths we need take weights—
Put on such armour as our divers use;
To rise above the fathomed we must bear
Weights, and you are weighted for emprise
Of rising to where flows the thinnest air,
And here beneath our towers you roost and run,
And trail your wings. I think I know your pain,
Your pain and weariness!
Like divers are ye that perpetually,
Plated in metal, make circuit about
Where some sidereal gesture has withdrawn
The tides, the main—
Condors with shuttered, iron-heavy wings!

THE BAT

In broad daylight
He should not be:
Yet toward and froward,
Froward and toward
He weaves a flight.
Who will guide him back to his cave,
A little bat astray,
Where he 'll rest on the breast of night,
Away from day's bright miscreation?
The linnet throbs through the air,
The magpie coquettes with day,
The rook caws "Time to be gone,"
And travels on;
While toward and froward,
Froward and toward,
The bat, a fathom
Of flight, weaves.

BLADES

Sojourner, set down
Your skimming wheel;
Nothing is sharp
That we have of steel:
Nothing has edge—
Oh, whirl around
Your wheel of stone
Till our blades be ground!

Harshly, quickly, under blades
Hafted with horn and wood and bone
Went the wheel:
Narrow long knives that should be one edge,
House-knives that sliced the loaf to the heel,
And scraped scales off mackerel,
And weighty knives that were shaped like a wedge—
Stone wakened keenness in their steel:
Knives with which besom-makers pare
Their heather-stalks, and hawkers' blades
Used by men of a dozen trades;
Broad-bladed knives that cut bacon-sides,
And stumpy knives for cobblers' hides,
With hunters' knives that were thinned with wear—
All were brought to,
All were laid on,
All were ground by
The Sojourner's wheel.

And those who filled the market-square
Saw hand and eye upon their ware

That were well-schooled and scrupulous
To spend upon that task their use.
But sparks came from the eyes and met
The sparks that were from edges whet,
As eagerly and wittingly
The dullness of each blade scoured he,
And the brow he bent was like a stone.

Over the grinding-stone he sang,
"The dalesman's sword shall make you fear,
And the dirk in the grasp of the mountaineer,
And likewise the pirate's blue cutlass
Who have left your blades long edgeless!"
But the men were thinking of games of cards,
And the looks of the boys were turned towards
The corner where they played pitch-and-toss
And the women thought of the herring across
The tongs to roast where pot-hooks hang.
"Unready and unforward men
Who have no right to any lien
On the gifts of Tubal Cain,
The gifts of our father, Tubal Cain!"

But no one drew meaning from the song,
As he made an equal edge along
One side of a blade and the other one,
And polished the surface till it shone.

"Now leave a blessing on what you have done."

"For what I have done I take my fee,
But no blessing I leave on it," said he,

"Everybody knows,
Everybody knows
That the knife-grinder
No blessing bestows."

Then the market-place, with wheel a-pack
He left, and the men to their cards went back
And talked of a bird in the cocker's loft;
And of liming linnets beside the croft
And boys told between pitch and toss;
And the women laid the herring across
The tongs to roast for a sloven's meal.

And he went out beside the peel
Tower, and through Saint Selskar's Gate,
Heading at a hearty rate
Towards the hilltops and the shades.

And three who brought back sharpened blades
To their fathers' stalls by the Tan-yard Side,
And then stayed while a blackbird cried
Quietly by their groundsills—
The butcher's daughter,
The cobbler's daughter,
The hawker's daughter,
Were lost on the hills!

THE LANDING

The great ship lantern-girdled,
The tender standing by;
The waning stars cloud-shrouded,
The land that we descry!

That pale land is our homeland,
And we are bound therefor;
On her lawns and in her coppice
No birds as yet make stir.

But birds are flying round us,
The white birds of the sea—
It is the breeze of morning,
This that comes hummingly.

And like the talk that comes from
A room where a babe is born—
Such clearness and such mystery
Are in words said on the morn,

Where, like a nation cloven,
In two our ranks divide:
One half on the high ship's bulwark,
One half by the tender's side;

Where, like a people sundered,
Who yet have each other's hail,
Faces look down from the bulwarks,
And look up from the tender's rail;

And names are called and spoken—
"Nancy," "Mary," "Owen!"
"Good-bye, and keep your promise!"
"Farewell to you, my son!"

They are more spirit-stirring
Than any words that are
Remembered from the spokesman
Of any avatar!

"Oh, all I had to tell you!"
"Ellen," "Michael," "Joan"—
"Good-bye, and God be with you!"
"And can it be you're gone!"

The great ship lantern-girdled,
Her engines thresh, immerse—
The great ship that had station
Takes motion for her course.

Her little course the tender,
Our little ship, goes on—
The stars they are fast-waning,
But we'll land ere 'tis the dawn!

Green, greener grows the foreland
Across the slate-dark sea,
And I'll see faces, places
That have been dreams to me!

BRANDING THE FOALS

Why do I look for fire to brand these foals?
What do I need, when all within is fire?
And lo, she comes, carrying the lighted coals
And branding-tool—she who is my desire!
What need have I for what is in her hands,
If I lay hand upon a hide it brands,
And grass, and trees, and shadows, all are fire!

IMITATION OF A WELSH POEM

And that was when the chevaldour
Through the whole of night
Sang, for the moon of mid-July
Made the hillside bright.

Morfydd to David ap Gwillam spoke
When the song they did not hear,
"Something is drawing through the fern,
A living thing comes near."

'Twas not the wolf, 'twas not the deer
That came with pause and bound;
A creature stood above the pair—
Ap Gwillam's Irish hound—

And knew them then, and knew them there
Where the pine branches wave,
As close beside, as deep in earth,
As lone as in a grave!

SCANDERBEG

She sat on the wall and dangled her silk-stockinged legs,
Saying, "I will not have them all stung for any old man
who is dead,"
So I went where the nettles were rank and came on a
stone that read,
"Matthew de Renzi,
Knight, born in Germany,
Descended from George Castriot, alias Scanderbeg,
Who fifty-two battles waged with conquest against the
Great Turk."
More: the Knight de Renzi,
Learned in Irish, composed for it a Dictionary,
Corresponded with men of state upon affairs,
And died here; fifty-seven his years—
Peace be with Matthew!
Then I looked where she sat on the wall dangling her
silk-stockened legs,
Which she would not have stung for any old man who
was dead,
As she said—
Not even, I supposed, for a descendant of Scanderbeg!
But I heard a curlew
Over the river beside me, the Shannon it was,
And saw from that to the Danube, and it was crossed
By turbaned men under whose stallions' hooves the grass
Never grew again;
And that battlefield, the Plain of the Blackbirds, Kossovo,
And the Sultan Murad slain,
And the breach in Constantinople's wall, and Belgrade,

Buda and Vienna under great cannonade,
And the sweep of the Pashas onward till Hungary, Poland,
the Germanies were all dismayed,
And that historyless man, George Castriot, holding at bay
Byzantium's conquerors in the mountains of Albania;
Then battles along the Rhine,
And Dutchmen and English, Frenchmen and Irish, forcing
or holding this line,
And the Shannon crossed and Aughrim lost to our own
overthrow!
Two hundred years' battling in Europe at the name of
Scanderbeg
Spun through my mind as a curlew cried overhead!

ON TWO SISTERS WHOSE DEATHS WERE TOGETHER

In woods remote, hid in the mountain hollows,
Doves there are that have a gentler beauty,
Doves that are marked as by a poet's image,
And hence are called Doves of the Wounded Heart.

And such ye were, and we could never learn the
Call that would bring you to our breasts, our hands!
And such ye were, and ye were aliens in our
Barnyard-world—Doves of the Wounded Heart!

You who were proud no storm had ever turned your
Flight, and you who were her cherished one—
May ye have found, hid in their mountain hollows,
Your woods remote, Doves of the Wounded Heart!

IN MEMORY OF JOHN BUTLER YEATS

"To-night," you said, "to-night, all Ireland round
The curlews call." The dinner-talk went on,
And I knew what you heard and what you saw,
That left you for a little while withdrawn—
The lonely land, the lonely-crying birds!

Your words, your breath is gone!
O uncaught spirit, we'll remember you
By those remote and ever-flying birds
Adown the Shannon's reach, or crying through
The mist between Clew Bay and Dublin Bay!

ODYSSEUS

(In Memory of Arthur Griffith)

You had the prose of logic and of scorn,
And words to sledge an iron argument,
And yet you could draw down the outland birds
To perch beside the ravens of your thought—
The dreams whereby a people challenges
Its dooms, its bounds. In ungrown days we knew you,
In ungrown days we heard you, and we heard
Amongst boys' and old men's voices
A man's full voice. The hillsides knew you too,
The deep sea knew you, where you'd swim of mornings,
And we would call you by a kindly name.

And by that name I'd speak to you, and say:
"You were the one who knew
What sacred resistance is in men
That are almost broken; how, from resistance used,
A strength is born, a stormy, bright-eyed strength,
Like Homer's Iris, messenger of the gods,
Coming before the ships the enemy
Has flung the fire upon. Our own, our native strength
You mustered up." But I will never say it,
Walking beside you, or looking on you,
With your strong brow, and chin was like a targe,
And eyes that were so kindly of us all.

And sorrow comes as on that August day,
With our ship cleaving through the seas for home,
And that news coming sparkling through the air,

That you were dead, and that we'd never see you
Looking upon the state that you had builded.

The news that came was like that weight of waters
Poured on our hopes! Our navies yet unbuilded,
Our city left inglorious on its site,
Our fields uncleared, and over
Our ancient house the ancient curse of war!
And could we pray, touching the island-homeland,
Other than this: "Odysseus, you who laboured
So long upon the barren outer sea;
Odysseus, Odysseus, you who made
The plan that drove the wasters from the house,
And bent the bow that none could bend but you:
Be with us still:
Your memory be the watcher in our house,
Your memory be the flame upon our hills."

FIRST EAST TO WEST ATLANTIC FLIERS

I

A soldier, not of Fortune, but of some
Idea laboured by philosophers:
A soldier always, though there's monk in him,
And poet also: watch how he salutes
The anthem, or the ensign, or the line
Of marching men: his upraised hand, his eyes
Salute a drill, salute a chivalry:
Frederick of Prussia, Frederick Barbaross!

II

Something that's like the fabulous content
In whales or hippopotami is in him,
This small-eyed man of ample girth who stands
Square, a steersman! Vision must become
Readiness, wakefulness, and unfailing craft
To burst through longitudes, to beat the winds,
And fogs and squalls make light of! This is he
Who fronts a course the arc-Atlantic wide!

III

Jaunty and gamey, like a lad that's in
A ballad that they sing in Kerry fairs,
One joins himself unto the two are here,
And he is of the breed of those who were
Soldiers of Fortune born, that were wont
To put all skill and spirit in a charge—
The men who followed where the Wild Geese went:
Fortune still counts, and with him she will be!

BRENDAN

On the third day from this (Saint Brendan said)
I will be where no wind that filled a sail
Has ever been, and it blew high or low:
For from this home-creek, from this body's close
I shall put forth: make ready, you, to go
With what remains to Cluan Hy-many,
For there my resurrection I'd have be.

But you will know how hard they'll strive to hold
This body o' me, and hold it for the place
Where I was bred, they say, and born and reared.
For they would have my resurrection here,
So that my sanctity might be matter shared
By every mother's child the tribeland polled
Who lived and died and mixed into the mould.

So you will have to use all canniness
To bring this body to its burial
When in your hands I leave what goes in clay:
The wagon that our goods are carried in—
Have it yoked up between the night and day,
And when the breath is from my body gone,
Bear body out, the wagon lay it on;

And cover it with gear that's taken hence—
"The goods of Brendan is what's here," you'll say
To those who'll halt you; they will pass you then:
Tinkers and tailors, soldiers, farmers, smiths,
You'll leave beside their doors—all those thwart men
For whom my virtue was a legacy
That they would profit in, each a degree—

As though it were indeed some chalice, staff;
Crozier, or casket, that they might come to,
And show to those who chanced upon the way,
And have, not knowing how the work was done
In scrolls and figures and in bright inlay:
Whence came the gold and silver that they prize,
The blue enamels and the torquoises!

I, Brendan, had a name came from the sea—
I was the first who sailed the outer main,
And past all forelands and all fastnesses!
I passed the voiceless anchorites, their isles,
Saw the ice-palaces upon the seas,
Mentioned Christ's name to men cut off from men,
Heard the whales snort, and saw the Kraken!

And on a wide-branched, green, and glistening tree
Beheld the birds that had been angels erst:
Between the earth and heaven 'twas theirs to wing:
Fallen from High they were, but they had still
Music of Heaven's Court: I heard them sing:
Even now that island of the unbeached coast
I see, and hear that white, resplendent host!

For this they'd have my burial in this place,
Their hillside, and my resurrection be
Out of the mould that they with me would share.
But I have chosen Cluan for my ground—
A happy place! Some grace came to me there:
And you, as you go towards it, to men say,
Should any ask you on that long highway:

"Brendan is here who had great saints for friends:
Ita, who reared him on a mother's knee,
Enda, who from his fastness blessed his sail:
Then Brighid, she who had the flaming heart,
And Colum-cille, prime of all the Gael;
Gildas of Britain, wisest child of light."
And saying this, drive through the falling night.

HAWAII

I

Not in a grove where each tree loses its presence, not singly, do Lehua trees grow; they are Lehua trees only when they grow as I saw them growing at Kapaho, on Hawaii.

When I had seen them before they were mingled with other trees, or they grew singly, a tree here and a tree there: looking upon them I had marvelled that the poets of Hawaii had emblemed their warriors as Lehua trees.

But in Kapaho, on Hawaii, they stand upon lava rock and upon lava crust; some like mighty champions, like Kamehameha, like Umi, stand upon high places, upon mounds and rocks of lava. All stand in ranks as if all the warriors of the Eight Islands stood spear-ready upon that lava waste.

With branches from the ground they grow. From top to bottom the blossoms show themselves—not blossoms but the precious ornaments the warrior decks himself with.

The blossoms show themselves amongst the leaves; they are like scarlet birds, the lost i-i-wi birds, come back to hide and show themselves in the trees beloved of Hiiaka.

They stand upon the lava waste, upon black rocks and amongst black shingles; rank upon rank they grow, like warriors standing erect in the red glow of the volcano.

I saw your lava-mounting trees, and I marvelled no more that your poets had emblemed your warriors as Lehua trees.

. . . They have departed, the warriors whom these trees emblemed. Honey for the birds of Heaven, wreaths of red for girls to deck their lovers with—these your Lehua trees still bring out of your fire-formed rock, Hawaii.

II

I call on you, beloved—
Breast so cold, so cold!
Oh, so cold, I have to say
I ku anu e!

How very cold the wind is,
How very cold the dew—
Bodies all a-shiver say
I ku anu e!

What if this we do
Against wind, cold, and dew—
Put arms around each other?
Just so that we need not say
I ku anu e!

III

From afar it has come, that long rolling wave; from Tahiti it has come; long has it been coming, that wide-sweeping wave: since the time of Wakea it has been on the way.

Now it plumes, now it ruffles itself. Stand upon your surf-board with the sun to lead you on! Stand! Gird your loin-cloth! The wave rolls and swells higher, the wave that will not break bears you along.

From afar it has come, that long-rolling wave; long has it been coming, that wide-sweeping wave. And now it bears you towards us, upright upon your board.

The wave-ridden waves dash upon the island; the deep-sea coral is swept in-shore; the long-rolling wave, the wide-sweeping wave comes on.

Glossy is your skin and undrenched; the wave-feathers fan the triumphing surf-rider; with the speed of the white tropic-bird you come to us.

We have seen the surf at Puna; we have seen a triumphing surf-rider: Na-i-he is his name.

IV

The old back-turning world had passed him by,
The world that left Columbus in his chains,
And Belisarius begging from his curb,
And Clown Grimaldi weeping lonely tears!
But he knew not these names that mean to us
Fortune's wheel turned: his Columbus sailed
Up the Pacific in canoes were hollowed
In Hawaiki with the greenstone axes,
In Hawaiki in the old, lost days.

I found him once, old game-cock on the roost,
Watching with shuttered eye, and had him take me
Where Laka was not—
Laka the goddess of the green-branched altar,

Where he was master of a dance was merely
Bellies like millstones turning; yet he sat there
Like some great virtuoso who's once more
Before his audience; he wore the ilima wreath,
And from the ipu, from the gourd he rattled,
Came sounds as strange as echoes—
Came sounds like echoes from Hawaiian caves . . .
. . . Far, far, far within the dance is for the King,
The wreaths are smelling like an isle of flowers,
And like an isle of sea-birds rising up,
The dancers move, and he is there, the Master!

The crocus-yellow ilima grows beside
His grave: 'tis where canoes once sailed
For Bolotua and the Southern Seas;
His house is overgrown—that quiet house
That had an old man sleeping on its mats.

V

The sign is given; mighty the sign: *Tapu!*
All murmurs now, speech, voice
Subdue: inviolable let evening be.

Inviolable and consecrate:
Edgeways and staggering descends
The sun; rain vanishes;
A bonus of bright light comes back.
Hawaii keeps the ordinance: *Tapu!*
Even far Tahiti now is still, perhaps.

The Island's shelter-giving houses stand;
The Chief withdraws, the sacred cup is his;
The mothers call on Kuhe as they give
Their babies to sleep. O early slumber
Of the heavenly company thou art indeed!
O Ku, O Lono, O Kane, they are yours
The evening hours (subdue
All murmurs now, speech, voice
Inviolate let evening be).

It is evening; it is hallowed for being that:
Let tumult die within us all: *Tapu!*
The spies of heaven, the stars return: *Tapu!*
And peaceful heaven covers peaceful earth.

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